

4 wherein, if a thumbnail is active,
5 i) the processing unit generates a pop-up bar,
A² 6 based on descriptive textual information, for the
7 active thumbnail, and
8 ii) the video display unit renders the pop-up bar
9 over the rendered [t] thumbnail.

~~Add new claims 61, 62 and 63:~~

1 ~~61.~~ 61. A man-machine interface method for permitting a user
2 to act on thumbnails, each thumbnail representing an
3 associated object containing information, for use with a
4 machine having a video display device and a user input
5 device, the man-machine interface method comprising:
6 a) generating a three-dimensional environment, having
7 a depth, to be rendered on the video display device;
8 b) determining a two-dimensional location and a depth
9 of each of the thumbnails in the three-dimensional
10 environment, wherein, for each of the thumbnails, the
A³ 11 depth is a function of at least one property of the
12 object associated with the thumbnail; and
13 c) generating the thumbnails within the
14 three-dimensional environment, at the determined
15 two-dimensional locations and depths, to be rendered on
16 the video display device.

1 62. A system which permits a user to interact with
2 thumbnails, each thumbnail representing an associated object
3 containing information, the system comprising:
4 a) an input facility for accepting user inputs;
5 b) a storage facility containing

- 6 i) a two-dimensional location, a depth and state
7 information for each of the thumbnails;
8 ii) a two-dimensional cursor location, and
9 iii) a three-dimensional environment having a
10 simulated depth;
- 11 c) a processing unit which
12 i) accepts user inputs from the input facility,
13 ii) updates (a) the two-dimensional location, and
14 state information for each of the thumbnails
15 contained in the storage facility, and (b) the
16 two-dimensional cursor location contained in the
17 storage facility, based on the accepted user
18 inputs,
19 iii) updates depth information for each of the
20 thumbnails contained in the storage facility based
21 on at least one property of the object associated
22 with the thumbnail, and
23 iv) generates video outputs based on
24 A) the two-dimensional location, depth and
25 state information for each of the thumbnails,
26 B) the two-dimensional cursor location, and
27 C) the three-dimensional environment,
28 contained in the storage facility; and
29 d) a video display unit for rendering the video
30 outputs generated by the processing unit.

63. A machine readable medium containing data and machine executable instructions which, when executed by a machine, performs the method of claim 61. 